

FORM B – BUILDING

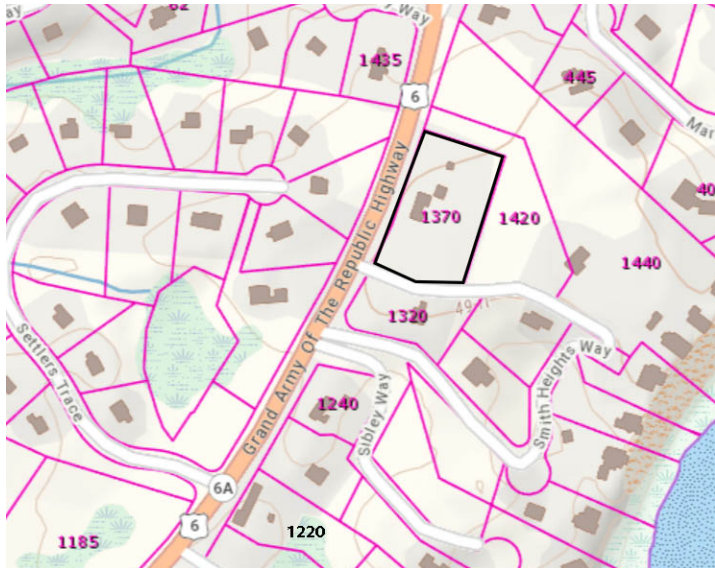
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from west.

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates
Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2020

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

18-60

ORLEANS

EAS.19

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
South Eastham

Address: 1370 State Highway

Historic Name: Charles O. & Rebecca Knowles House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1850

Source: deeds, historic newspapers, historic maps

Style/Form: Greek Revival/crosswing

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Garage, 20th c.

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Entrance removed from gabled façade on west side, 20th c.

dormers added to crosswing roof, 20th c.

porch enclosed & wing added on rear, 20th c.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☐ yes ☒ **Date:** ca. 1905 (reputedly)

Acreage: 1.198

Setting: The house and associated buildings are situated on the State Highway amid dense roadside development comprised of historic properties and more recent summer cottages.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Charles O. & Rebecca Knowles House, built ca. 1850, is a story-and-a-half wood frame single dwelling with a crosswing plan. It was reputedly moved to its present location in ca. 1905. The front facades of both wings are on an equal plane with the front-gable section containing three bays that has a window replacing an entrance near the junction of the wings; two windows are located in the upper-story gable. The corners and eave lines distinguished with pilasters and friezes respectively. The façade of the cross-gable wing contains an off-center entrance with a trabeated architrave flanked by two windows on the south side and one on the north. The south side of the house contains two windows indicating the presence of two principal rooms within; a chimney located in the dividing partition is gone. A chimney is extant in the kitchen wing. Shed roof dormers have been added to both sides. A one-story shed-roof wing has been added to the north end of the kitchen wing. Fenestration on the rear (east) facade has been altered; a porch spanning the rear of the kitchen wing has been enclosed and a triple casement window unit added. A one-story wing with a separate entrance in its south gable end is attached to the southeast corner.

The house is sited in the center of its one-acre parcel set back from the highway behind a lawn and screened by heavy foliage. A driveway enters the south end of the frontage and follows a circle in front of the barn. An open yard is located south of the house; the northern portion of the parcel is wooded. A driveway enters the southeast corner of the parcel from northern leg of Smith Heights Way and leads to a two-car garage north of the house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

According to Eastham Historical Society house files, the house now numbered 1370 State Highway was moved to this site around 1905 from just south of Eastham's Town Cove cemetery, which is located opposite the intersection of State Highway and Hay Road. It currently occupies a lot of land that Francis W. Smith (1858-1943), the son of Nathaniel and Hannah Cole Smith of Eastham, purchased in 1897 from the heirs of James Rogers, who lived at 1080 State Highway (EAS.15) and had probably acquired the property from the heirs of Jonathan Snow, whose house is depicted in this area on the 1858 Eastham map.¹ (The possibility that the 1370 State Highway house belonged to Jonathan Snow should be verified.) In 1905 Smith, who within four years began to develop the summer colony known as Smith Heights Cottages (EAS.M) on the easternmost part of his land bordering Town Cove, sold a small portion of the land to Charles Osborn Knowles of Topeka, Kansas.² The deed does not cite the existence of buildings and does not state a purchase price, but the 1905 Eastham map attaches Knowles's name to the property. And certainly by the summer of 1909, a house was present on the lot and served for many years afterward as the summer home of the Knowles extended family.

Topeka connects most of the people associated with 1370 State Highway. In 1859 Harriet Amanda Snow (1835-63), the daughter of Jonathan and Bethiah Freeman Doane Snow, married George Doane (1829-86), the son of Barnabas Doane (1788-1864) and Thankful Knowles (1787-1856) of Eastham, who two years earlier had migrated to Topeka. Also, in 1857 George's married sister Lucinda Doane Knowles (1816-88) and her husband Joshua (1816-69) also moved there from Eastham.³ They were preceded by George's and Lucinda's brother Abner Doane (1826-90), who came to Topeka in 1855. In that year the Massachusetts (later New England) Emigrant Aid Company had begun pooling capital to aid New Englanders with antislavery or abolitionist ideas in settling the Kansas Territory; the society reasoned that if enough New Englanders of this ilk moved to Kansas the territory would ultimately enter the Union as a free state. Of all these early Topeka-bound Eastham natives, Abner Doane is the only one whose antislavery credentials have been documented. Already in Topeka by November 1855, he joined

¹ Charles A. Rogers to Francis W. Smith, 8 November 1897, BCD 231:434. This is a mortgage deed and covers two parcels, one being twelve acres on the east side of State Highway and the other four acres on the west side. Charles Rogers, James Rogers's youngest son, acquired his married sister Mary McWilliams's interest in the east-side property on 31 August 1897 (BCD 229:333).

² Francis W. Smith to Charles O. Knowles, Topeka KA, 6 September 1905, BCD 275:57.

³ William E. Connelley, *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans* (Chicago: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1918), 4:1997-98, states that Joshua Knowles (a salt manufacturer in Eastham in 1855) came to Kansas in 1857 but returned to Massachusetts, as many of the New England-born Kansas emigrants did, but in 1859 he sold his Eastham home to Gustavus Swift, later the well-known Chicago-based meat packer, and returned to Topeka. He raised sheep and rented them on share to farmers, help build the pontoon bridge across the Kaw, and was among the incorporators of Topeka Bank and Savings Institution.

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the company that defended the new town of Lawrence, Kansas, from pro-slavery "border ruffians" from Missouri.⁴ Whether Abner Doane's emigration, or that of any other Eastham person who settled in Kansas before the Civil War, was financially aided by the Emigrant Aid Company is not solidly established, though a 1914 biographical sketch stated that he was a member of "one of the emigrant aid societies" who came to Kansas in 1855 "with a Bible in one hand and a Sharpe's rifle in the other." He and his brother-in-law Joshua Knowles and others built the first pontoon bridge across the Kaw River, and Abner Doane was part-owner of Topeka's first sawmill, likely built at least in part with New England Emigrant Aid Company funds. The company also contracted with him to build a school in Topeka in 1857.⁵ The 1868 Topeka directory, the city's first, lists Abner Doane as proprietor of Topeka Mill Company, George Doane as a teamster, Joshua Knowles with no occupation (and presumably retired), his sons Charles O. Knowles as a blacksmith and Albert W. as a builder, and one other man native to Eastham—Nathan P. Horton (1828-1913), a son of Cushing and Rachel Higgins Horton, who came to Topeka in 1858 and was then toll tender on the Topeka Bridge.⁶

George Doane came back to Eastham to married Amanda Snow and returned with her to Topeka. The 1860 census lists him as a laborer, and the couple's daughter Sarah was born later that year. Amanda Snow Doane died early in 1863, and by 1865 daughter Sarah was sent to South Eastham to live with her grandparents, Jonathan and Bethiah Doane Snow. Though some accounts say her father moved back to Eastham with her, by 1870 George Doane was living in Colorado, and he died there in 1886.⁷ In 1880 Sarah Doane was eighteen and living with her grandmother (Jonathan Snow had died in 1869), and later that year she married Eastham fisherman Francis W. Smith, who had grown up in the Thumpertown section of Eastham. Though no will or deed has been located to affirm it, one recorded land plan of 1916 states that Sarah Smith inherited from her grandfather Jonathan 5.6 acres on the east side of State Highway in this section; the parcel of nearly equal size that Francis Smith bought in 1897 bordered it on the north.

Charles Osborn Knowles (1843-1916) was the younger of two sons of Joshua and Lucinda Doane Knowles and moved with his family to Topeka in 1857. In 1870 he married Rebecca Holmes (1851-1937), a native of Illinois, and the couple had two children, Charles Briggs Knowles (1886-1953) and Catherine, or Kate (1871-1961). He had begun his working life in Topeka as a blacksmith, but from the early 1870s until 1889 he and his brother Albert William Knowles (1839-1916) ran a retail hardware business in Topeka. In 1894 daughter Kate married Josiah Alfred Cole (1864-1930), a son of Josiah M. and Mary E. Doane Cole of Eastham who moved to Topeka between 1880 and 1894.⁸ By 1900 Charles O. Knowles was a Topeka banker (his brother Albert was vice president of the Bank of Topeka) and living in a household of eleven people—himself, his wife, their four adult children George, Lucy, Charles B., and Kate, Kate's husband J. Alfred Cole, their young children Alfred Osborn and Wilbur Doane, his mother-in-law Margaret Holmes, and an African American domestic servant. Charles O. Knowles was working in real estate at the time of his death in 1916.⁹

Since at least 1893 J. Alfred Cole had spent parts of most summers in Eastham at the home of his mother Mary E. Doane Cole (1835-1934), and she sometimes left Eastham to spend long vacations with him in Topeka. It may have been at their suggestion that Cole's father-in-law Charles O. Knowles began to vacation in the town. In 1903 and 1905 he, his wife, and son Charles spent the summer at Francis W. Smith's home on State Highway, and in 1908 his brother Albert and his wife stayed at Smith's house while visiting "many friends and old schoolmates." The house that became 1370 State Highway must have been moved to the site, and though one newspaper account from May 1909 documents such a move, family accounts state that Smith moved

⁴ On 21 November 1855 slavery supporter Franklin Coleman shot and killed Charles Dow, an antislavery settler, which triggered the formation of a militia composed mostly of Missouri settlers that aimed to rid Lawrence, a town founded by the New England Emigrant Aid Company, of its "free-staters."

⁵ See James L. King, *History of Shawnee County, Kansas And Its Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Richmond and Arnold, 1905), 61, 74, 80; "Brief Sketch of Abner Doane in the Archives," *Topeka Daily Capital*, 14 June 1914, 16; New England Emigrant Aid Company Papers finding aid, Kansas Historical Society, <https://www.kshs.org/index.php?url=p/new-england-emigrant-aid-company-papers/13794>. The company provided reduced rail fares for emigrants, gave them temporary housing until they built or found their own, and financed the construction of saw and grist mills in Topeka, Lawrence, and seven other towns in the Kansas Territory.

⁶ Another early emigrant was Freeman Cobb, born in Eastham in 1837 and the son of William C. and Susan Cobb. He moved to Topeka between 1855 and 1860 and was working as a clerk there when he died on 31 July 1860.

⁷ *Daily Commonwealth* (Topeka), 9 May 1886, 7.

⁸ Other Eastham natives in Eastham about the turn of the century included John Bangs, Elbridge Higgins, Warren Crosby, James Savage Jr., and Maurice D. Gill.

⁹ "End Comes to Pioneer Topekan at Home of Daughter: Coming to Topeka in 1859, He was Identified with the City's Business Nearly Half a Century," *Topeka Daily Capital*, 20 September 1916; "North Eastham: Charles O. Knowles," *Hyannis Patriot*, 9 October 1916, 4, copied from *Topeka Daily State Journal*.

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this building, the former John Doane law office in Orleans, to become part of Hunter Cottage, one of the seven Smith built on Smith Heights.¹⁰ Whether this moved building became part of the Hunter Cottage or the nucleus of 1370 State Highway, however, deserves examination; no record of the "summer home" of the Topeka Knowles family has been found that dates before mid-October 1909.

Cape newspapers regularly recorded the arrivals and departures of the Knowles family in South Eastham.¹¹ After Charles O. Knowles died his widow and son Charles still came to their Eastham seasonal home until Rebecca Holmes Knowles died in 1937; by 1918 Charles B. Knowles was a superintendent of Topeka Bridge and Iron Company, and his brother-in-law J. Alfred Cole was secretary and treasurer of that firm. In early 1939 Charles B. Knowles sold 1370 State Highway to Alfred Osborne Cole (1896-1970), the son of J. Alfred and Kate Knowles Cole, and in 1940 Francis W. Smith sold Cole about an acre of land adjoining the small house lot.¹² Alfred O. Cole was a salesperson for Central Topeka Paper Company and was a traveling paper salesman for most of his career; by 1930 his parents and he had moved to San Francisco. In 1938 Cole married Kansas native Vaunietta McAdams, and the 1940 census lists the couple in Eastham and Cole's occupation as a traveling stationery salesman. By 1942, and probably earlier, the Coles lived the rest of the year in Brookline.

In 1965 Alfred O. Cole sold 1370 State Highway to Garrett Van A. Graves and his wife Suzanne of Chevy Chase, Maryland, who nine years later sold the property to Kenneth D. and Betsy B. Lewis of Hamden, Connecticut. The Lewises owned 1370 State Highway for more than twenty years and sold it in 1996 to Karl and Joanrose Kueng. Joanrose Kueng sold it to David J. White in 2017, and he was the owner of record in 2020.¹³

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¹⁰ "Orleans," *Hyannis Patriot*, 24 May 1909, 6: "The small building known as the John Doane Office, used long years ago by Lawyer Doane, has been removed from its accustomed place and will become part of a summer cottage in Eastham. It has been purchased by Mr. Francis W. Smith of that town, who with a gang of men removed it last Wednesday."

¹¹ See "Eastham," *Hyannis Patriot*, 18 October 1909, 4, and 16 September 1937, 10; "South Eastham," *Barnstable Patriot*, 22 July 1912, 4, and "Eastham," 31 July 1916, 4; "Eastham," *Yarmouth Register*, 12 July 1913, 5.

¹² C. B. Knowles, Shawnee KS, to Alfred O. Cole, 2 January 1939, BCD 548:470; Frank W. Smith to Alfred O. Cole, 23 September 1940, BCD 573:110. "Eastham," *Hyannis Patriot*, 16 February 1939, 9, stated that Alfred Cole of Boston had "purchased the home of his grandmother, the late Mrs. Charles Cole of Topeka, Kansas. The homestead is at Smith Heights and preparation are being made to have it renovated." The newspaper erred in the name of Cole's grandmother: it should have been Mrs. Charles Knowles.

¹³ Alfred O. Cole to Garrett Van A. Graves and Suzanne A. Graves, Chevy Chase MD, 23 August 1965, BCD 1310:376; Garrett Van A. Graves and Suzanne A. Graves, Nashua NH, to Kenneth D. and Betsy B. Lewis, Hamden CT, 29 May 1974, BCD 2080:288; Kenneth D. and Betsy B. Lewis, 1370 Route 6, to Karl and Joanrose Kueng, 1370 Route 6, 30 January 1996, BCD 10035:165; Joanrose Kueng, Orleans, to David J. White, 1370 State Highway, 4 January 2017, BCD 30221:76. The original lot of 1370 State Highway is depicted on "Plan of Lands of Francis W. Smith and of Sarah M. Smith Eastham, Mass.," ca 1916, BCD 4:133. The plan cites the wrong deed for the Francis W. Smith parcel; it should be BCD 231:434.

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MAPS

Rogers, Josiah, Elijah Knowles, and Simeon Kingman. A Map of Eastham. 1795.

Hales, John G. *Plan of Eastham and Orleans*. 1831.

Walling, Henry F. *Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket Massachusetts Based upon the Trigonometrical Survey of the State*. New York: D. R. Smith and Co., 1858.

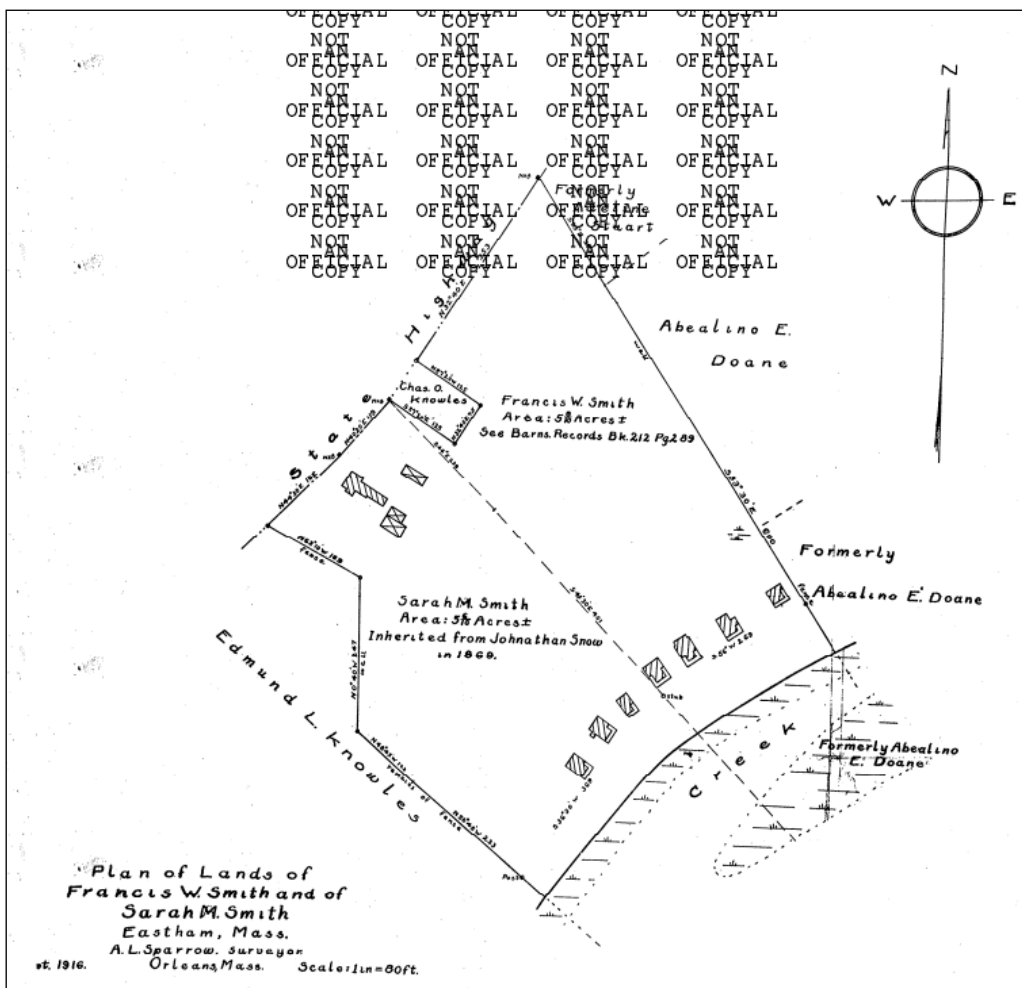
Official Topographical Atlas of Massachusetts Compiled and Corrected by H. F. Walling and O. W. Gray. Boston: Stedman, Brown and Lyon, 1871.

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SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES



This Smith plan of about 1916 (BCD 4:133) shows the 1370 State Highway parcel as "Chas. O. Knowles" but does not depict the house; the 1905 Eastham map, however, attaches Knowles's name to a building on this site. Smith's Smith Heights Cottages, built between 1909 and 1916, are shown on the east end of the property.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)



View from south.



View from east.